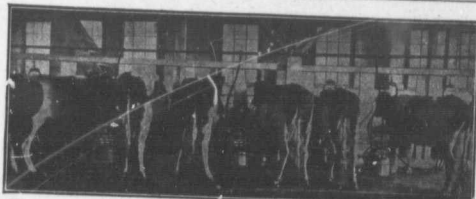


LESSONS LEARNED AT THE EXPERIMENTAL UNION MEET

The Best Varieties of Many Farm Crops Tested by Over 5,000 Experimenters in the Last Year. A Summary of Results. Possibilities of the Small Farm. Labor Problem Comes in for Discussion



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It was an optimistic atmosphere that prevailed the various sessions of the Ontario Agricultural and Experimental Union held at Guelph on Tuesday and Wednesday of last week. This organization, composed of ex-students of the Ontario Agricultural College, banded together for the purpose of furthering the experimental work conducted at the college, has met with success far beyond the dreams of its founders. The progress the Union has made, was well summed up by Prof. C. A. Zavits, the secretary, in his report, during the five years of the Union's work, from 1886 to 1890, the average number of experimenters each year was 71. In the five year period from 1906 to 1910 the number was increased to 4,278. Previous to 1886 only students of ex-students were supplied with material for experimental purposes. The great growth of the Union since then has been due largely to permitting all interested agriculturists to take part in the experiments. In 1912 there were 5,027 experimenters in agriculture.

In the last few years the Union has added cooperative work in botany, apiculture, forestry, horticulture, elementary agriculture in the public schools and horticultural work to its list.

In his presidential address, F. W. Goble, Woodstock, Ont., urged experimenters to do all in their power to further the work of the college. Millions of dollars, he said, had been added to the wealth of the province through the findings of Prof. Zavits alone. Working in another department, Prof. W. H. Day had demonstrated conclusively, the value of underdrainage. Experimenters could do much to make these findings better known throughout the country. But Mr. Goble did not confine himself to the beaten track of previous presidential addresses. "It would seem unreasonable," said he, "for the farmers' stock to have water bowls and for the wife to carry water." Later in the session this question was discussed by Mr. Nelson Menefish and Prof. H. Day. The latter dismissed the relative merits of hydraulic ram and the gasoline engine for supplying the home with water, and condemned the ram as wasteful where there was not an abundant supply of water. Mr. T. G. Raynor, in discussing the same subject added a new twist to the case when he remarked that "we must have the same conveniences in the country home as in the city home. If we work the boys on the farm we must keep the girls there too."

REPORT OF EXPERIMENTERS

The educational feature of the meet was the annual report on the cooperative experiments by Prof. C. A. Zavits. A summary of professor Zavits' results is given in table form on page three of Farm and Dairy this week. He made particular mention of their experiments with oats. Only three varieties were tested, the Silver Linen, Regenerated Abundance and Lincoln with 50.2, 47.1 and 46.5 bushels of oats per acre respectively. The difference in yield between 50.2 and 47.1 bushels may not seem large, but Prof. Zavits noted that if this difference could be made in the whole oat crop of Ontario it would mean that 9,500,000 more bushels would be harvested each year. Particular mention was made of the Lincoln. This oat, which was the lowest in yield of the three varieties, was highest at Toronto and Winnipeg exhibitions this year and in field crop competitions always

stands high. This is because it makes such an attractive appearance in the field. "Do we want an attractive oat or one that has the feed in it?" asked Prof. Zavits.

Prof. Zavits noted a growing popularity for amur, which, for some years, has surpassed both barley and oats in yield. Buckwheat, the professor noted, has made the greatest progress in increase over Ontario of any grain in the last five years. In speaking of sweet corn of which every farmer should grow some for table use, the speaker mentioned the Golden Bantam as being an exceeding fine, sweet, juicy corn unequalled for flavor. The ears are small, but they are there in greater numbers than in case of the Cory and Evergreen.

A MANGEL ILLUSION DISPELLED

Prof. Zavits contended the alto-gether too prevalent idea that the long red mangel is the most desirable one from the crop production standpoint. In experiments conducted at the college and throughout the province, the Yellow and Intermediate have for several years stood considerably ahead of the Long Red and in 1912 the Ideal, a mangel of tankered form, gave the highest yield. Just at this point a member asked the professor what he thought of the sugar mangel. Prof. Zavits answered that the sugar mangel contained eight to 10 per cent. in sugar as compared with five per cent. in the red mangel, and 15 per cent. in the sugar beet, but did not give as large a yield as the mangel.

The highest yielding fodder corn did not prove the most popular. The White Cap Yellow Dent which was third in yield with 17.96 tons per acre as compared with 17.29 tons of the very Early Yellow Dent, was the most popular and the one that it would be most advisable to plant in Ontario. Particularly favorable mention was made of the Davies Warrior, a variety of potato that yielded 184.6 bushels per acre in this unfavorable season, proving itself very handy and almost free from rot. In early potatoes Irish Cobbler and Extra Early Europa are the best with little to choose between them.

A SLIPPERY QUESTION

Prof. Geo. E. Day compared his attempt to deal with the distribution of labor on the farm as similar to the attempt that a toothless cow might make to eat a large hard slippery turnip. All that he could do would be to polish some of the dust off the question. Prof. Day does not believe ordinary business principles could be applied with advantage on the average farm. He cited the two weakest points in farm management as being the tying up of a great amount of capital in unproductive material and the tremendous demand for labor. As remedies for the latter he suggested that all manure be taken to the fields in the winter and spread, that machinery be repaired in winter for the next season as well as buildings, fences, etc., the preparation of seed grain in the winter and over and above all, the development of the live stock end. This stock end will be dealt with more fully in a future issue of Farm and Dairy.

The possibilities of farming on a small area were brought home to the audience in a most convincing manner by J. W. Clark, Cairnair, Ont. Prof. F. W. Krouse, Guelph, Mr. Clark's success is too well known to the readers of Farm and Dairy to require further comment. Suffice it is to say that last year from his 25-acre farm

(Continued on page 11)